

Washington, DC -- As part of his ongoing effort to ensure emergency responders in New York have the equipment and gear they need, Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today announced that application materials for the federal Assistance to Firefighters Grant (AFG) program are now available online and that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS) will begin accepting electronic grant submissions next Monday, August 15.

The congressman's office is available to assist local fire and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) teams with any questions they may have about the grant application process. Hinchey has been a strong supporter of the AFG program, which has delivered nearly \$20 million in federal grants to fire and EMS organizations across the district he represents.

"The Assistance to Firefighters Grant program has been an enormous success. This program has provided local fire and EMS departments with critical resources needed to pay for much-needed equipment and protective gear that saves and protects lives," Hinchey said. "Day after day, our first responders put themselves in harm's way to protect our local communities, and it is up to us to ensure they have the protective equipment and tools needed to safely and effectively do their jobs. This program also spares local communities from much of the expense associated with the new equipment. I encourage all local fire and EMS departments to apply for grant funding and to contact my office with any questions."

The application guidance and materials are currently available online at [www.fema.gov/firegrants](http://www.fema.gov/firegrants). The application period for the Fiscal Year 2011 AFG program opens on August 15, 2011 at 8:00 a.m. EST and closes on September 09, 2011 at 5:00 p.m. EST. Applications must be submitted electronically through the fire grants website.

More than \$400 million is available this year from the AFG program. The initiative helps fire departments and non-affiliated EMS meet their firefighting and emergency response needs by

funding various types of needed equipment ranging from emergency response vehicles to Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA) to power generators. The AFG program supports emergency organizations in providing funding for equipment and gear necessary to more effectively protect the health and safety of the public and emergency response personnel.

Hinchey has sponsored a number of workshops in the district he represents with officials from the DHS and the Federal Emergency Management Association (FEMA) in order to assist local fire departments and EMS organizations with their applications for federal grant funding. Those workshops have helped local fire and EMS departments successfully navigate the grant application process. Hinchey is also the author of the SERVE (Supporting Emergency Responders' Volunteer Efforts) Act, which would provide a \$1,000 federal tax credit to individuals who are active members of volunteer firefighting and EMS organizations.